

July 23, 2024 | Flash Brief

Israeli Airstrike Kills Hamas, Fatah Commanders in West Bank City of Tulkarem



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The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) **eliminated** two commanders belonging to Hamas and the Fatah-affiliated al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades in a drone strike on July 23 in the northern West Bank city of Tulkarem. The IDF said Hamas commander Ashraf Nafeh was "responsible for manufacturing and embedding explosives intended to attack IDF soldiers, as well as recruiting new operatives into the Hamas organization." Nafeh maintained connections with Hamas operatives outside of the West Bank who were involved in planning terrorist attacks in the region, the IDF noted. Killed alongside Nafeh was the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades commander Muhammed Abdo, who carried out shooting attacks against IDF soldiers and helped raise funds and procure weapons for terrorist groups in Tulkarem.

The IDF was able to carry out the strike after it lured the commanders into a specific target zone, *The Times of Israel* reported. As well as Nafeh and Abdo, Israel **eliminated** Muhammed Badiaa, who belonged to the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades in Tulkarem. Palestinian media **reported** that the Israeli strike killed five people and wounded others.

Since the October 7 Hamas-led terrorist assault on southern Israel, the IDF **says** it has eliminated "hundreds of terrorists" in the West Bank, arrested over 4,200 wanted persons, and carried out 57 airstrikes.

Expert Analysis

"The Israeli drone strike on terrorist commanders in Tulkarem is an important step in eliminating terrorist threats in the West Bank. Hamas is increasingly attempting to infiltrate Palestinian cities in the northern West Bank and destabilize the area, spreading terror threats and weakening the Palestinian Authority. This is part of Hamas's long-term plan after its October 7 attack on Israel." — **Seth J. Frantzman**, *FDD Adjunct Fellow*

"Hamas and the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades in Tulkarem are responsible for a recent string of shooting and IED attacks against Israeli troops and civilians in the northern West Bank. The attacks are just one example of the terrorist groups entrenched in Tulkarem, a city that has transformed into a terrorist stronghold like Jenin and Nablus." — **Joe Truzman**, *Senior Research Analyst at FDD's Long War Journal*

Islamic Jihad Responsible for Deadly West Bank Bombing

The Iranian-backed Palestinian Islamic Jihad terrorist organization claimed responsibility for a deadly roadside **bombing** on July 1 in the West Bank that resulted in the death of an Israeli officer and the serious injury of another soldier. The incident took in the Nur Shams camp near Tulkarem, where IDF Sgt. First Class (res.) Yehuda Geto, 22, was participating in a counterterrorism operation. According to an initial investigation by the IDF, a Panther armored personnel carrier had been at a staging point that was initially believed to be free of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). However, after soldiers had disembarked from the vehicle, leaving two members of the unit behind, an IED **detonated**, causing significant damage to the carrier, killing Geto, and wounding a commando from the IDF's Duvdevan unit, which carries out undercover operations in urban areas.

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